

Last week this paper asked a very important question: what's in this health care reform bill for Western New Yorkers? Today I'm very pleased to answer that question.

Most importantly this bill will provide financial security, and not only for each of you by making sure your health care costs don't skyrocket as coverage decreases, but also provides financial security for our nation.

In a recent speech Peter Orzag, Director of the Office of Management, and Budget said nearly \$5 trillion of our national deficit comes from the failure to pay for two policies, the Bush tax cuts and the unpaid for Medicare prescription drug benefit.

Like all legislation that passes the House of Representatives, this bill must be paid for in full. It's been certified as being deficit neutral and the non-partisan Congressional Budget Office says it will reduce the deficit by \$104 million over 10 years.

This bill is necessary to our nation's economic health and will improve care for each of you for several reasons:

- This bill reigns in costs and assures that 85% of premium dollars are spent on health care, not administrative costs or insurance company profits.
- It removes lifetime and yearly caps insurance companies use to dictate how much they're willing to spend on your care. Medical costs are a leading cause of personal bankruptcy; last year in my district alone there were 1,000 personal bankruptcies caused by health care costs.
- Our bill increases quality of care by requiring all insurance plans to meet a minimum standard. It ensures that you can take your insurance with you if you lose your job, change jobs, or move.
- This bill provides security and eliminates the notion that your insurance company can deny you coverage because of a pre-existing condition.
- It invests in preventative care eliminating co-pays and deductibles for procedures like mammograms, colonoscopies, immunizations and hypertension treatments.

For our seniors, the bill improves Medicare benefits and closes the prescription drug donut hole.

This bill will promote small business growth helping more than 1,400 in my district alone provide coverage for their employees, who often go without benefits because they are too small to negotiate lower prices like big businesses.

And it will help 180,000 families who make too much to qualify for Medicaid, but not enough to afford their premiums, pay for insurance.

This is an historic bill for all Americans, including Western New Yorkers. I will be proud to vote for this bill and cannot wait for it to start helping my constituents.